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MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, Task Force 16

24 FEB 1958

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SUBJECT : FID; [REDACTED] or OCR†

FUNCTIONS

1. FID is charged by regulation to perform two functions:
 - a. To exploit foreign language publications
 - b. To translate material as a service to the CIA and, when possible, to other agencies.

Let us examine each of these briefly to see how these functions are carried out and whether or not they are properly reference functions as the library committee seems to imply.

EXPLOITATION

2. Considering the responsibility to exploit foreign language publications. In general, FID has initiated and carried out a dynamic program to follow foreign periodicals and sundry publications and make available to the intelligence analysts the essence of the written material. The basic question is whether or not this exploitation of foreign literature could or could not be more efficiently carried out if FID were transferred from CG to OCR. For FID to do its mission properly, it is required that:

- a. FID be able to acquire promptly and retain for an appropriate length of time the documentary material that it requires. At the present OCR provides the material for FID in such an efficient manner that an organizational change would not improve the service.
- b. FID be responsible to the community requirements and priorities with regard to material to be exploited and method of exploitation. This is unrelated to the organizational position of FID and not a matter for discussion.
- c. The product of FID be made available in such format and quantity that the consumer may have full use of it. Since this is a major weakness in the present system, I shall devote the next paragraph to the problem.

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3. There are probably three viewpoints in this regard, namely [REDACTED] OCR, and the consumer. [REDACTED] would logically consider that the problems of indexing, filing and recall are not a portion of FID's responsibility. It is my understanding that OCR accepts the general responsibility for these functions; but in the face of the mammoth indexing, filing, and recalling tasks, OCR claims that it is incapable of undertaking the function. Moreover, OCR questions whether or not such action is essential. The consumers, principally the DD/I components, are anxious to have the FID material put into systematic files and be available for recall. It is the goal of OSI, at least, to relieve the analyst of the responsibility for maintaining voluminous files. Consequently the consumer believes that FID abstracts must be indexed and filed in a recoverable manner. Now, would this function be carried out best with FID in [REDACTED] or in OCR. I cannot see any logical reason to give the nod to either. I believe that the basic fault, as seen from a consumer's viewpoint, is that OCR has not always recognized that it is their job to keep material in an available and usable form. There is no question that without a terrific effort no significant improvement can be anticipated in this direction.

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TRANSLATION

4. The second responsibility of FID is that of providing translation services. It is my general impression that FID would be glad to be shut of the responsibility. [REDACTED] has stated this several times. We are continually training our analysts in the Russian language, but cannot hope to have them all able translators, even in Russian, let alone other languages. It is absolutely necessary that we have a good translation service available. Let me state the facts. In one branch I surveyed the translation requests and found that the usual service required on the average of 3 1/2 months. It took from 9 July to 25 September to have a single page translated. In another instance, on 16 August 1957 an urgent request was made for the translation of a 127 page booklet in Russian. To date, the translation has not been received. To put a little brightness in the picture, FID has retained [REDACTED] in OSI on a 50% basis to service short requests. This service has been excellent and has saved our skin many times.

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5. Would the translation service be performed more quickly if FID were under OCR, if the translation function were transferred to OCR? Certainly the translation business is a service function in contrast to the exploitation of literature. The two functions do not need to be together, except that the two require people with the same capability. On this basis, and on it alone, I would recommend that FID retain the translation service. (I would hope that steps could be taken to speed translations which have deadlines.)

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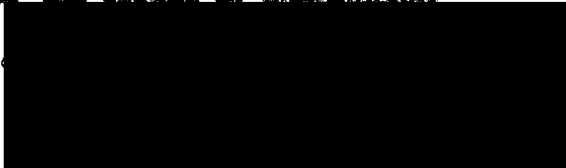
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CONCLUSION

6. In my opinion there are no strong reasons which demonstrate that the FID should be moved from [REDACTED] to OCR. Although there are certain weaknesses in the services rendered by FID and OCR, a change in organization would not make any significant change in services. Hence, I recommend that FID be continued as a Division of the Office of Operations.

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